



Huntley Headlines

Friends of Historic Huntley

Spring 2021

Park Staff Wins FCPA Stewardship Award

Congratulations to Huntley Meadows Park (HMP) staff and others who worked to create and install the new entryway orientation exhibit at the HMP Visitor Center! Contributing park staff members were honored with a **2020 Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA) Trailblazers Award** for the exhibit, which showcases the link between the built and natural environments of Historic Huntley and HMP. The exhibit presents the two sites in side-by-side dioramas, announcing that “Huntley Connects You to Treasured Habitats and Homes.” It includes a topographic map showing Historic Huntley and HMP as a single park comprised of two connecting components. ❖



1905 Social Register Extract

A second Huntley? Debbie Robison has theorized that Historic Huntley was named after the Scottish Huntly Castle owned by T.F. Mason’s ancestors in “Huntly: Why Was it Built That Way,” *Northern Virginia Notes*, January 2, 2015 (available at www.novahistory.org/Huntly/Huntly.htm). A granddaughter of T.F. and Betsey Mason, Virginia Mason Davidge (also known as Mrs. Charles G. Taylor), is listed in

the summer Social Register of 1905 (and later years) as summering at “Huntly” in Portland, Connecticut. Did granddaughter Virginia name her summer home after “our” Huntley; did/does the Huntly home in Connecticut share the same family namesake as our Huntley; or did the two homes just coincidentally bear the same name and a common member of the Mason family? This is one of the many Historic Huntley mysteries—which seem to keep growing—waiting for researchers to resolve! ❖

Plein Air Spring Event Postponed to 2022

Due to the pandemic, the joint FOHH-FCPA Plein Air spring event, originally scheduled for spring 2020, has been postponed until spring 2022. Participants remain enthusiastic and agree that the long postponement will result in a much-magnified sense of festive celebration when it actually occurs. ❖

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President's Column

by Todi Carnes

The year 2020 is finally behind us. We seek the new and the different as a means of resisting “Groundhog Day” living that being confined to home can engender. At their first meeting of 2021, the FOHH Board created two new committees: the **Lawncare Research** and **Lafayette Anniversary Committees**.

The mission of the **Lawncare Research Committee** is to determine whether there are specialized techniques, technologies, and personnel for the care of historic earth terraces, like those that form the Huntley villa’s southern lawn. The committee will identify and research relevant written and internet sources, as well as locate and reach out to other historic sites that have terraced grounds.

The **Lafayette Anniversary Committee** was established in recognition of the upcoming 200th anniversary of General Lafayette’s farewell tour of the United States in 1824-25. It is well documented that during his tour Lafayette visited Alexandria, Washington, D.C., Mount Vernon, and Woodlawn for what amounted to a considerable period of time in the vicinity of Historic Huntley. It seems likely that somewhere along the way, T.F., and possibly Betsey, Mason attended one or more social events at which Lafayette was present. The purpose of the committee is to conduct research documenting any meeting between the Masons and Lafayette. A second path of research, if their paths did cross, is to consider how Historic Huntley might participate in marking the anniversary of Lafayette’s visit to the area.

While Board members have seeded each of these new committees, additional members are needed to help with research. If you would like to join either (or both!) of these committees—or have a research lead to pass on—please contact me at todicarnes@verizon.net. ❖



Historic Huntley, a painting by John G. Kofler, donated by the artist to FOHH. Long-time Huntley fans may remember that in 1996 FOHH lent then-Lee District Supervisor Dana Kauffman this watercolor for display in his office. Though supervisors have come and gone, the painting has remained on display in the supervisor’s office at the Franconia Government Center. The watercolor has been reframed and archivally rematted courtesy of FOHH Board Member Charlotte Brown. Photo by Charlotte Brown.



Site Interpreter Cheryl Repetti assists a young visitor in learning about ice tongs. Photo by S. Walley.

Year-Round Huntley Programming

Since opening to the public in 2012, both Historic Huntley programs and house tours were limited to the summer season (April to October). The pandemic has changed that. With people continuing to look for safe social activities outside their homes, demand for house tours continued past the usual October end date. Accordingly, Saturday tours were continued through November and on-site outdoor programs (such as twilight tours, family hilltop outings, and campfire safety) were scheduled throughout the winter months.

Additionally, the pandemic-inspired virtual programming originally created for summer camps continues to be popular in its own right and as a form of complementary instruction for children not physically in schools. These programs know no seasonal restrictions. Time will tell whether that becomes a feature of the post-pandemic “new normal.” ❖

LiDAR image of Historic Huntley. A new way to view Historic Huntley: the earthen terraces in front of the Huntley villa are clearly visible in this extract from 2018 LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) imaging of Fairfax County, ©Fairfax County GIS and Mapping.



Upcoming FCPA Programs

For more information and to register, call 703.222.4664 or go to www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes, click on **Find a Program**, and search by **Historic Huntley**, **program name**, or **code**.

Epidemics of the Past (14-Adult)

Disease has always shaped our history. Enjoy a healthy stroll up to a lovely view while we uncover why the Masons built a summer home upon a hill and how epidemics of the past shaped the society we live in today. \$8.

- May 20, 9:30-10:30 a.m., Code: ZGS.3RH2

Twilight Hilltop Tour (Adults)

Historic Huntley sits high upon a hill overlooking Hybla Valley and Huntley Meadows Park. It's a dramatic setting made all the more stunning by the setting sun. Join us after hours for a special tour and see the house in a different light. Light refreshments served afterward. Dress appropriately for the weather. \$8.

- April 16, 7:15-8:15 p.m., Code: D3E.BG3K
- May 23, 7:45-8:45 p.m., Code: D3E.TVDL

Campfire Safety for Families (4-Adult)

Families learn how to safely build and enjoy a campfire plus make s'mores. Children must be accompanied by a registered adult. \$10.

- March 20, 1:00-2:00 p.m., Code: CE0.I9J4

Enslaved Lives and the Legacy of Slavery (Adults)

Join a historian for a tour of Historic Huntley that examines the relationship of the Mason family to slavery. Gain insight into the lives of the Humphrey family and other enslaved people whose labor maintained Mason wealth and social status. \$8.

- March 24, 10:00-11:00 a.m., Code BF1.930Q

Family Hilltop Outing (5-Adult)

Join us for a family friendly tour of Historic Huntley high upon a hill. What significance does this villa have to one of our founding fathers? Can you hold a block of ice with just one finger? Challenge yourself using historical tools like ice tongs and see if you can master old-timey children's games. Hop back in time with us to discover life of days past. Children must be accompanied by a registered adult. \$8.

- March 28, 1:00-2:00 p.m., Code: AN7.Q200
- May 14, 3:00-4:00 p.m., Code: AN7.UQ5D
- April 24, 2:00-3:00 p.m., Code: AN7.8700

House Detective (Adults)

What clues reveal the story of a house? What can architectural details and styles tell us? Examine photographs, artifacts, and the buildings of Historic Huntley and see if you can resolve some of the enduring mysteries of this place. \$8.

- April 7, 10:00-11:00 a.m., Code: 7A9.M7LG ❖

FRIENDS OF HISTORIC HUNTLEY

P.O. Box 7241

Alexandria, VA 22307-0241

Address correction requested

Huntley-Related Web Sites

www.historichuntley.org

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/historic-huntley

www.friendsofhuntleymeadows.org

Tour Historic Huntley

Enjoy southern Fairfax County's most scenic outlook at **Historic Huntley, the small house with a big view**. A Fairfax County Park Authority site, the property is on the National Register of Historic Places, the Virginia Landmarks Register, and the Fairfax County Inventory of Historic Sites.

On April 24 the **Historic Huntley tour season** kicks off with scheduled Saturday tours and tours at other times by appointment. Tours are limited to one family group of one to nine people. Saturday tours (at 10:30 a.m. and noon) are only by advance ticket purchase beginning in April at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/historic-huntley/hours-tour. To schedule a tour by appointment, email kylie.starck@fairfaxcounty.gov.

The grounds are open from dawn to dusk from March through November.

For more information: 703.768.2525, www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/historic-huntley. ❖

Join Friends of Historic Huntley today!

Support Historic Huntley by joining this group of history- and historic preservation-minded people. Members receive the newsletter, an invitation to a members-only event, and a 10% discount on FOHH merchandise. FOHH is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization. Membership dues and contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. With your volunteer efforts and financial support, we can make a difference.

Name _____ Tel _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Email _____ May we email *Huntley Headlines*? _____

☐ \$15 Individual ☐ \$20 Family ☐ \$10 Student/Senior

☐ \$150 Lifetime Membership ☐ Additional donation _____

☐ New Member ☐ Renewing Member Total enclosed _____

I'm interested in volunteering in the following area(s):

HH (work with staff at HMP): ☐ Docent ☐ Greeter ☐ Research

FOHH: ☐ Fundraising ☐ Program Planning ☐ Public Relations ☐ Special Events

Send completed form with check payable to *Friends of Historic Huntley* to:

FOHH, P.O. Box 7241, Alexandria, VA 22307-0241

Questions? info@HistoricHuntley.org

Huntley Headlines is produced by Friends of Historic Huntley, a local citizens group formed to preserve Historic Huntley and related cultural resources through advocacy and education.

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Address changes:

Please send your mailing label with corrections to the address above or to info@HistoricHuntley.org.